THE EVENING TIMES.

FRANK A. MUNSEY

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NOT ALTOGETHER ALTRUISTIC

In this week's issue of "London Truth" Labouchere reads his compatriots a curtain lecture anent the "American invasion." As usual with this gifted writer's commentaries, this one does not lack its proper ingredient of "ginger," and it is doubtful if the truths which he dishes up for British digestion will be greatly relished. The epitome of Labouchere's lecture is that if Englishmen will keep their money at home, instead of employing it in all sorts of ventures abroad, they will have nothing to fear from competition either by the United States or by Germany.

There are portions of the article in question in which, in a sarcastic vein, he tells the British public that the Americans are gobbling up English railways, steamship lines, and other industrial enterprises merely to show John Bull how these things can be run expeditiously and profitably. Of course, Labouchere understands perfectly—none better than he—that when the Yankee engages in such undertakings as those which now so seriously disturb British complacency he is not moved by altruistic considerations. He is out for the coin, and the probabilities are strongly in favor of his getting it. Nevertheless it is quite possible that American methods of doing business and managing things may furnish our British cousins an object lesson which they will study with considerable profit.

SKY-SCRAPERS

THERE is a vigorous protest in Chicago against the erection of any more sky-scrapers of unreasonable height. This will surprise many people who have believed that the pet ambition of every Chicago citizen was either to own or to rent a habitation or an office in a building fifty stories high. But now we have Chicago people calling the sky-scraper a barrier to progress. If it really scraped the sky, as its name suggests, it would certainly be a benefit to some cities, of which, however, Washington is not one; but it does nothing of the kind, and neither the sky nor anything else benefits very much by its extraordinary altitude.

Thus far the objections urged against this form of architecture have been mainly esthetic. It was claimed that it dwarfed every other building in its neighborhood—as it does—and that it was hardly ever artistic in form—as it is not. But there is another objection.

It is now pointed out that the sky-scraper is an incendiary literally of the first magnitude; that it is not only a menace to other buildings' looks, but to their actual safety. It is obvious that when such a building does catch fire, it has every facility for scattering sparks far and wide, over the roof of everything in sight which is of less altitude. It is also plain to see that no ordinary fire-engine is of the least use on such a building. The stream of water sent by the hose will not reach anywhere near the top. There is nothing to do but to let it burn. To pull it down or blow it up would endanger the safety of all the other buildings on the street. Moreover, unless very carefully constructed, such a building is apt to prove a veritable chimney. The building of the Central Power House in Washington a few years ago shows what a beautiful piece of fireworks a large building surrounding a court-yard can make of itself on proper provocation.

THE ORIGIN OF "PETER DOUGLASS"

IN garrison life "Peter Douglass" means a dead man—that is, officially, not really dead. It had its origin at Fort Monroe a quarter of a century or more ago, though there are a number of officers who knew the original Pete and quite a number more who knew the facts in regard to his case.

One of the leading officers of the artillery service today, then a lieutenant, was sent from Governor's Island, in New York Harbor, to Fort Monroe with a detachment of nineteen soldiers. They came down by sea, and the first night out the soldiers got on to a barrel of fine whisky which was in the hold, and by the aid of a gimlet and some straws the most of the nineteen men were in a very hilarious condition before midnight. On the second night out some of them tackled the barrel again, and in a short time they were again intoxicated.

Among the number was Peter Douglass. When the time came for them to land at Fort Monroe Peter Douglass could not be found. It was generally thought he had fallen overboard, or, while intoxicated, had jumped overboard. Anyhow, the lieutenant turned over but eighteen men. He reported Peter Douglass as having been drowned, and the record was made accordingly. Three days afterward, when the ship that brought the party down was unloading some freight at Charleston, S. C., Peter Douglass crawled out of the hold looking somewhat the worse for his experience. After bracing up he managed to work his way to Fort Monroe, where he supposed he would join his command, but on presenting himself to the officer in command there he was told that as the record there had shown that Peter Douglass had been drowned they were required to consider him dead, even if he was not dead.

Douglass admitted that he was pretty nearly dead, but that he had managed to pull through. Anyhow, he was not admitted to the quarters at the garrison, and was told that he had better move along; that he was out of the army as surely as he had ever been in it. But Peter did not go far away. That evening he met some of his comrades, three in number, from Governor's Island, and they celebrated his coming to life in true soldierly manner. The celebration wound up in the guardhouse there, as did the celebrators. The record of the guardhouse showed that, though Peter Douglass had been reported dead a few days before, he was very much alive. Two days afterward the names of the four were sent to the officer in command as a preliminary to have them court-martialed and punished for disorderly conduct and other violations of the law of the garrison.

The officer, who was a strong advocate of the power of record, ruled that as Peter Douglass had never entered the garrison he could not be court-martialed, and that, in fact, Peter Douglass was dead beyond resurrection. He was therefore turned out and again told to move on, but as he did not realize that he was dead he did not do so. He hung around the garrison for some time, but finally wandered away and got back to New York. Officially he has remained dead ever since, for the record has never been changed. The officers preferred to let him remain dead and get him out of the army in that way than to try and reform him by court-martial, for he seemed to be beyond reform.

HARMONY AND GASTRONOMY

DID it ever occur to you to ask yourself why you are regaled with the bars of "Annie Laurie" while munching your shrimp salad in certain restaurants? Did you ever ask the waiter why the "fiddlers three" were employed to saw off chunks of symphony while you were wrestling with tough porterhouse steak? Of course, the proprietor has some purpose in soothing your savage breast, for orchestral music costs money, no matter how squeaky the fiddles or how wheezy the clarionet. The question that occurs to us is, why should the cost of half a dozen popular airs be added to the cost of your steak or mutton chop? Is there a mysterious occult connection between harmony and gastronomy? Or between discord and mastication? We can easily conceive of a good many reasons for supplementing the work of a poor chef with distracting discord. If the discord is particularly rasping it is apt to divert the attention of the listener from the poorly cooked Hamburger; it is also apt to rouse the temper of the patron to such an extent as to make him hasticate viciously and energetically, totally unmindful of the exceeding toughness of the mallard duck. But where the cooking is fine and the menu tempting in variety and quality, what is the object of orchestral accompaniments?

There are several explanations that occur to us. The diverting character of music has a tendency to make the patron linger longer at the table and order more generously from the bill of fare. Under the captivating charm of "A Tale of the Bumble Bee" or some other popular air, one is apt to forget that the pay check is growing constantly larger. Instead of rushing away from the table after disposing of a potted pigeon one carelessly regales himself with some high-priced dessert which he would never order under ordinary conditions. This, of course, is profitable for a restaurant. It is easy to see that music may operate as a good digestant; it induces a mental composure which is favorable to assimilation, and no matter how rich the dessert, a few bars from "Those Goo Goo Eyes" will easily dispose of it.—What to Eat.

Abroad.

"I want to introduce you to some Americans I just met."

"No, I don't want to meet them. They're intensely vulgar, I know."

"But they're not so bad—from the West."

"O, that's different. I was afraid they were from New York."—Life.

Two Women.

"Really, I did not know what to think when Fred proposed to me last evening. Why, he hadn't known me more than a week."

"Perhaps that was the reason, dear."—Boston Transcript.

CLERKS ANXIOUS ABOUT THE PROPOSED RETIREMENT BILL

By JOSEPH TRAINOR, of the Sixth Auditor's Office.

A FEW weeks ago I addressed a communication to The Times with reference to the retirement of the aged and disabled clerks in the Government departments, which elicited a statement from Mr. Starr, chairman of the National Clerks' Retirement Association Committee, to the effect that the committee had a bill nearly completed which would be ready to be presented to Congress for action about the 1st of June. This statement did not bring much encouragement to the clerks, for they knew that by that time Congress would be making preparations to adjourn, and there was no probability, or at least little probability, of Congress taking up the measure and passing it at that late period in the session. And their hearts continued to sink at the future prospect of the desired legislation, as they reasoned that the next session of Congress will be a short session, at which the legislative body will be busy with the appropriation bills for the ensuing fiscal year and other important matters, and will have little or no time to devote to a matter of this kind.

Then, too, it may be impossible to get any future Congress to take any interest in the matter, and even the clerks themselves, by reason of deferments and disappointments, may become discouraged, lose interest in it, and resign themselves to their fate, believing there never will be any possibility of getting Congress to give the desired legislation. Thus, "hope deferred maketh the heart sick" with many of the clerks who were most vitally interested in getting this measure through Congress; and I also believe that every clerk in the classified departmental service in Washington, if not so deeply as these, or do not feel themselves so, are yet more or less interested in this legislation.

Recently there have come into my possession some figures, which are said to be reliable, which are interesting, and have a great bearing on this subject. Out of 15,450 cards examined of clerks in the classified service in Washington there are 806 clerks who are over sixty-five years of age and who have been in the civil service ten years or more.

Now, an assessment of $3 per month upon each one of these 15,450 clerks (though I favor an assessment of 2, 3, or 4 per cent of each one's salary as more equitable) would yield a monthly sum of $46,350. To retire the 806 superannuated clerks mentioned above at $50 per month—the only proposition that I find meeting with favor at all among the great majority of clerks—would require a monthly disbursement of only $40,300, leaving a monthly surplus of $6,050 for oiling the machine and making it run smoothly in the matter of collecting and disbursing the said fund.

(Since the above figures were compiled some 2,000 or more other clerks have been covered into the civil service by Executive order, which has proportionately increased the number of clerks to be assessed, while probably none, or very few, indeed, have been added to the list of the superannuated.)

The retiring of 806 aged clerks would mean over 1,200 promotions for the younger clerks of the present force and 806 new appointments—over 2,000 immediate changes that would be brought about by action of Congress, if a retirement measure were passed, and, as it were, by a stroke of the pen on the part of the executive officers, and all in the interest of the younger clerks in the departments and those who would come in from the outside.

As a friend said to me, in discussing this matter, "What more could the 'young bloods' in the departments want?" I also ask the same question.

But it all still remains with the committee mentioned whether we are ever to have this legislation—so far as it lies in its power to bring it about—and when are we likely to get it? It would be a great satisfaction to the many clerks interested and possibly to all the 15,450 clerks in the departmental service in Washington to know what are the views of the committee on the prospect of the measure, and when, if ever, it is likely to be got through Congress.

POLICE SYSTEMS—Bluecoats Credited With Having Fun When They Are Hard at Work.

AGITATION has lately taken place over the New York police system—that is, the alleged overworking of the police. In comment on this a New York newspapers says:

"The foolish souls who have been weeping over the woes of policemen who say they get no leisure or recreation ought to visit our local racetracks and diamond fields."

Now, whatever may be the merits or demerits of the fight for the three-platoon system in New York, there seems to be a hole in this sort of argument which is visible without a microscope. The grievance alleged by the defenders of the police is that the patrolmen have no time to spend at home with their families, compared with that enjoyed by the average citizen, and from all the evidence it looks as if this were true. It is true in Washington, whether the New York policeman is in the same condition or not. A man is not at home with his family when he is at the race track or the ball game, and it does not at all follow, as the newspaper seems to think, that he is there because of choice. Has that paper forgotten that policemen have to be present in considerable numbers at these places to protect the public from the undesirable citizens who thither flock to fleece the crowds? They are not likely to be there for fun, unless they are in citizens' clothes, and if so, how did the author of that paragraph know they were policemen?

Possibly the idea is that if a man is in a place of amusement on duty he is not working. Many people have that idea about dramatic criticism, for example. They think that a dramatic critic has a good time because he has nothing to do but go to the theater. They do not understand that any pleasure in the world soon becomes stale if repeated too often, and that when pleasure is closely associated with hard work it ceases to be recreation. Most dramatic critics, when they want to amuse themselves, go where they will not see or hear of a playbill. Going to the theater for fun is, to them, about on the par with the delights of the hayfield to the farmer who has been working there all day. It is fun for the city visitor, but not for the man who makes his living by it. If a man has been on duty eighteen hours out of the twenty-four and wants to get home and go to bed, or take his children into the country for an afternoon now and then, he does not care whether part of those eighteen hours were spent at the baseball game or not, except as it might be a trifle more interesting than a Broadway corner or a beat in Harlem. It was well said by one social economist, "What working people need after their day's work is rest, and they want decent homes to rest in more than they do outside amusements."

THE DEAR OLD BROOK.

Do you remember still the old brook, dear,
Where softened sunlight falls through arching trees
And gilds the purling cascades with its gold;
Where side by side we walked in days of old,
While woodland odors filled the cooling breeze
And nature's harmonies brought heaven near?

Do you remember still those peaceful days
When perfect trust gave life its chiefest charm
And hope knew not of sordid thought or care,
But wove her sweetest fancies for us there,
Nor dreamed of future sorrows, nor of harm,
And love, unfettered, glorified our ways?

Ah, though I roam the wide world o'er and view
Its panoramic marvels at my feet,
Ne'er shall I find a spot, to me, that seems
As lovely as the one that fills my dreams
When fancy calls me back to that retreat
Where in those days I wandered, dear, with you.

No more the timid thrush's note so soft,
No more so sweet the woodland violet;
No more so cool the breeze upon my brow,
Since we may no more roam those byways now;
Yet ne'er, while memory lasts, can I forget
That dear old brook where lingered we so oft.

—Emile Pickhardt in Boston Globe.

FAKE DRAMAS—Not Only the Critics But the Public Is Beginning to Ask if It Is Not About Time to Have More Realism in the Lines and Situations of the Play.

EVERY lover of the drama must have wondered why, in these days of alleged realism on the stage, there is so much faking of a palpable kind, and perhaps it is worth while to attend to some of the more obvious forms of this and subject them to a mild analysis.

Of course, we all know that classic plays have errors of all sorts in them, due generally to the ignorance of the authors. Shakespeare's map of Bohemia is a cloak which has covered a good many sins of this kind, though considering the limitations of his day, Shakespeare was a remarkably accurate man. Moreover, the playwright has to possess knowledge of so comprehensive a sort that it is not surprising that his literary failures are more than occasional. He must not make a mistake in estimating the temper of the audience, or the ability of the actor, or the limitations of the drama as a form of expression, or the chances of a picturesque effect by the use of some line, action, or stage picture. If he makes a blunder in any of these lines the consequences are glaringly plain. Merely literary mistakes do not count for much in comparison.

But it does seem, sometimes, as if the faking process resulted in some entirely unnecessary literary faults. For example, in a play recently witnessed here we have at least three incongruities of form which could not be tolerated in a novel, and are not necessary to the play. First, an Englishman in the disguise of a French soldier, talking, supposedly in barrack-room French, quotes the doggerel about the rose being red and the violet blue—the humor of which would be untranslatable into French—and the lines do not even win a laugh, because they are so trite. Again, the superstition of the Bedouin is illustrated by the fact that he takes a silver bullet to kill a supposed witch. The silver bullet is a device which the Arab probably never heard of, and what is more, the average audience probably does not contain very many people who are familiar with the superstition, so that an incongruity is dragged in for the sake of producing what might be a literary effect if it belonged there.

Finally, we are told that one of the principal characters is shot through the heart, and the character survives for several minutes and makes a long speech, besides going through considerable muscular exercise. The line about the heart could have been left out without the slightest loss of dramatic effect and with a good deal more realistic effect. Not only the critics, but the public, is beginning to ask if it is not about time to stop putting real pumpkins and real buzz-saws and real dust-storms and things on the stage, and try to have more realism in the lines and situations of the play. If these are secured, the stage properties will take care of themselves, and it is pretty safe to wager that the audience will take good care of the play.

SUBMARINE DANGER

FRANCIS G. HALL, Jr., in the "American Shipbuilder."

THE development of a practical submarine torpedo boat has been so hard a task that every branch of science has been resorted to in accomplishing it. The insurmountable barrier to success encountered in building the early submarines was the necessity of a self-contained source of motive power. Steam has long since been abandoned as impracticable. The gasolene engine having reached a state of efficiency some years since for industrial use, was appropriate for this purpose. Advocates of submarine warfare found in it a convenient solution of their source of power.

The recent engines constructed in this country for the Holland boats, viewed purely from the standpoint of the engineer, are very efficient. But while intent in producing vessels that would navigate under the surface, no thought has evidently been given to the conditions of continual service either in peace or war. The present type of submarine torpedo boat to operate its engines has been designed to carry at least 1,000 gallons of gasolene or naphtha. This enormous quantity of explosive is stored in tanks in the vessel's hull. It is said that the Russian government regards gasolene as more dangerous than dynamite and will not permit it to be brought within several miles of government property. This is said to be the reason why the Russian navy has not adopted as yet the submarine torpedo boat.

A glance at statistics of fatalities due to gasolene explosions in this country is awe-inspiring in the extreme. Many of these explosions were due to spontaneous combustion or molecular change without the aid of any exterior agency whatsoever. Others were due to heat, flame or the electric spark. Each submarine boat carries an immense storage battery in close proximity to the gasolene tanks and piping. In practice it has been found that sparks frequently jump from cell to cell of this battery and the charging wires.

In the submarine boats now building for our navy the switches, fuses, and the various electrical contacts necessary for the control of the machinery are open to the air. Each time these devices are operated, sparks often larger than an arc light are formed. Not long since the gasolene fumes from the engines nearly killed the entire crew of one of the Holland boats. The presence of mind of the captain in hurrying to the hatch and summoning aid from the dock alone saved them from speedy death. Seven men were made insensible and some of them did not recover for a number of days. Had an electric switch been "thrown" or a "short circuit" occurred at any point this boat and its crew would have been blown to atoms. A death more awful than being blown to pieces penned in under the surface of the water it is difficult to imagine.

The officials of our Navy Department are fully conversant with this new danger and are expected to take measures prohibiting the use of these present submarine boats. The lives of Uncle Sam's brave tars should not be needlessly jeopardized by ordering them to serve in these death traps to go into commission in a few months. The present submarine boat is more dangerous to itself and crew than to the vessel attacked.

MODERN CIVILIZATION THREATENS ANCIENT BEAUTIES OF MEXICO

A SORRY day it will be for Mexico when the old arches are destoyed in the interest of modernization, or permitted to fall into decay because the iron girder has superseded them in usefulness—or cheapness, says the "Cincinnati Commercial-Tribune." Now, all over the country, the traveler whose eye is attuned to beauty is delighted with the spring arch, the true beauty line of architecture. The arch in Mexico is often massive, rather than light, even cumbersome, perhaps, but it is always graceful. Many of them make up in masonry what they lack in scientific proportion and construction, like the old Roman arches, but by this means they have stood for two or three centuries and will be a grateful relief to the landscape for as many more if they are permitted by the newcomer to endure so long.

In the magnificent aqueduct at Queretaro, a series of beautiful arches stretches across the valley for a mile and a half, carrying to the town pure water that its winding bed has guided from the mountains three or four miles away. The corners of the huge supporting columns of this aqueduct are of cut stone, all filled with a flat surface outward. The Mexican Central Railway passes through one of these arches that is about eighty feet high. The whole magnificent structure, nearly five miles in length, was presented to the town of Queretaro chiefly through the generosity of one man—the benefactor whose statue stands in the pretty plaza, the Marques de la Villa del Villar de la Aguila. There is a fountain arch at the corner of the market place in Queretaro.

In the corridors of the deserted monastery at Mexicalcingo that alteration of large and small stones is seen in all the masonry. It is probable that examination of the upper part of the arch would show three layers of thin stones, where the under portion shows two, thus making the spring or curve without wedge-shaping the large stones.

The long row of arches that rest upon the curious urn-like capitals are on the second story veranda of a Mexican hacienda home, overlooking the pretty green patio. It is interesting to note the elaborate floral decorations in the way of hanging baskets, orchids and potted plants. A glimpse of the chapel with which every large hacienda is provided is to be seen as a background of this picture.

There are prehistoric arches in Yucatan that resemble the arches of ancient Egypt and the peculiar, pointed entrance to the Pyramid of Gizeh. In an arch in the building known as the Monjas, at Uxmal, Yucatan, the stones forming it are not quite horizontal, but stand nearly, though not quite, at right angles with the line of the arch, showing how near an approach was made by these ancients to the true principle of the arch, as used today and for so many centuries.

Mexico is well known as a rich field for the architect, as well as the archaeologist, but her treasures for workers in these fields have not been half revealed. More money and time are being expended each year in the study of these interesting ruins, but there is yet no organization comparable to the Landmark Club of California, whose object is the restoration and preservation of the ruins of the Indian and Spanish buildings, erected centuries ago.

The arches best known to visitors to Mexico are in that beautiful aqueduct that reaches from the capital city to the hill of Chapultepec. It was built in 1603, and today lends an indefinable charm to the city and the country, but it is rapidly being sacrificed to the demand for the space it occupies and the encroachment of modern innovations.

A RESTLESS GHOST

THE Brown family lived within half a block of a boiler factory; not from choice, but because it happened to be the only house in town which at all suited them in other respects. And, after all, the noise was not so bad as it might have been. It shut down at night, and in the daytime most of the family were out.

But they had not been there long before a most unearthly racket was heard one night in the kitchen. It sounded as if the cat had been on a rampage through all the tin pans in the cupboards, and finished up by knocking the stove lids down the cellar stairs. It was a most unholy noise.

Investigation, however, revealed no cat, nor anything else which could have caused the sounds, and the Brown family retired to such rest as they could get for the remainder of the night. But the next night the performance began again. And the next. And the next. Finally Jim Brown, who was of an investigating disposition, said he would sleep in the kitchen and see if he could catch anything.

He did. He caught a ghost. It was a thing ghost and scared-looking, and seemed willing, even anxious, to account for itself.

"You see," said the ghost, tearfully, "I didn't mean no harm. I used to work in that there boiler factory, and then when I got too old they put me on as night watchman and give me a little house next to the works to live in. But that was pulled down after I—well, after I died. And I couldn't sleep peaceful in the cemetery, it was so dreadful still, so I thought I'd see if I couldn't put myself to sleep here. The cemetery, it's way off out of hearing of the boiler factory."

"Isn't there one nearer town?" asked Jim.

"Yes, there is."

"Then why don't you rent a tomb there, where you can hear the factory?"

And it was done, and the Brown family slept in peace.

And none of the neighbors knew that there had been any disturbance.

The Earth as a Furnace.

That it will be found feasable to generate steam from the heat contained within the crust of the earth is the opinion of Prof. Hallock of Columbia University. He would dig two holes about fifty feet apart to a depth of, say, 12,000 feet. The only problem then would be the making of a connection between these wells at the very bottom. Perhaps a hole could be broken through by the use of heavy charges of dynamite. These explosions might at the same time open up a considerable chamber down there, which could be used as a hot water heater. Cold water could be poured down one well into this chamber. Here it would be converted into steam almost instantly by the intense heat, and would then rush up out of the other well and into suitable engines attached to the wheels of industry. Once in place, a plant of this kind would run on indefinitely, at a cost that would make the price of coal a matter of utter indifference to its owner.

Particularly Out, Ma'am.

The old colored man had grown gray in service. He had almost become the custodian of the family secrets as he was of the family silver.

The married daughter, who lived in a distant town, had come home for a visit. Callers were coming all day long, and old Pompey was kept busy opening the door and receiving the visitors.

One bright morning the ladies of the family went out for a drive. Just after they left the bell rang, and Pompey recognized in the caller a former dear girl friend of his young married mistress.

"Are the ladies in, Pompey?" said the young lady.

"No, ma'am, they'se out, ma'am," responded the old retainer.

"I'm so sorry I missed them," replied the visitor, handing in her card. "I particularly wanted to see Mrs. Bell."

"Yes, ma'am, thank ye, ma'am. They'se all out, ma'am, and Mrs. Bell is particularly out, ma'am," was the reply that greeted her hearing as the visitor opened the gate and the front door closed.—New York Herald.

Free Translation.

A missionary lately returned from India, now in this city, complains of the slow progress made out there in converting the natives, on account of the difficulty in explaining the teachings of Christianity so that the ignorant people will fully understand them. Some of the most beautiful passages in the Bible are destroyed in translation. He attempted once to have the hymn,

Rock of Ages, cleft fo me,
Let me hide myself in thee,

translated into the native dialect so that the natives might appreciate its beauty. The work was done by a young Hindoo Bible student. The next day he brought his translation to the missionary for approval, and his rendering, as translated back in English, read like this:

Very old stone, split for my benefit,
Let me absent myself under one of your fragments.

—Chicago Inter Ocean.

The Sad and Solemn.

Here we are, the sad and solemn,
Walking up and down the world;
Thin and ragged is our column,
Somber is our flag unfurled.
By the wayside some are falling,
But we dare not stop or pause;
Solemn sadness is our calling,
Sadness solemn is our cause.

Why, or why, should we be merry?
All the world is merry-mad.
We alone are sad—so very,
Very, very, very sad!
And it makes us feel so sorry
When we hear the big crowd laugh;
What does laughter know of worry
And its burdens? Not the half.

Oh, we know there is a lighter
And a brighter way through life;
But because the way is brighter
It with pleasure, too, is rife;
And what do we want of pleasure
When there is so much of pain?
Is not pain the one true treasure
That our future bliss will gain?

Oh, we know our ranks are thinning,
And it makes us deeply sigh.
Yes, the living side seems winning;
We will win, sirs, when we die!
Ah, you laugh. But what is laughter
Scattering life's ills like chaff?
We, we think of the hereafter,
And are far too sad to laugh.

—John P. Sjolander in the "Galveston News."

An Urgent Call.

After dinner one very disagreeable night last week a certain Madison Avenue physician, looking from his office window and seeing the rain beat against the glass, decided that he would have a quiet, uninterrupted evening at home. He was soon in his house coat, a novel in his hand, and tobacco smoke was curling around him. About 10 o'clock some one rang the doorbell.

"The doctor is wanted right away at ——" began the caller.

"He can't go, sir," answered the servant quickly. "He left word that he was not well and that unless it was a case of life or death he would not venture out."

"Well, you tell him he must come over; we need him to sit in a poker game."

"Oh, you're Mr. B., are you? Step in, please, and I'll see."

A minute later the servant reappeared with: "The doctor says he'll be right over."—New York Evening Post.

Happened in Philadelphia.

A subtreasury employe is very angry because of a practical joke, played on him by one of his friends, whom he has not yet been able to locate. Several days ago the man purchased a package of grass seed, which he intended to plant in the front yard of his residence in West Philadelphia. While he was busy a lot of stamped check perforations were substituted in the package for the seed, which they considerably resembled in appearance, and these bits of papers were duly planted. Thus far they have failed to burst out in bloom. It is reported that it was the wife of the deceived Government employe who discovered that he had been duped and informed him of the trick.—Philadelphia Record.

OBSERVED IN PASSING.

The only absolutely practicable way of making people laugh with you instead of at you is to laugh with them when they laugh at you.

* * *

It may be true, as it says in the historical novels, that the hero, when he took a cab, "flung his purse to the driver," but the probability of the tale depends on the likelihood that there was nothing in the purse but two car tickets and a soapy dime.

* * *

Poetry about the bleeding feet on the road to fame is all very pretty, but as a matter of fact a stubbed toe is generally the trouble.

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The secret of the lion's reputation for greatness may be that he is not good to eat and does not wear wool, and hence has not been subjugated by man to any great extent.

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Any young woman who is rash enough to take Cupid in and make him a suit of clothes out of the kindliness of her heart will simply have to take the consequences.

At Last.

Sing—I see that the popular craze for historical novels is abating.

Song—Yes, even the bookworm will turn.—Baltimore News.